**EC & I 809 Chapters 10 & 11 Response Gunn May 23rd, 2009**

**Part One: (Chapter 10)**

**Which groups are usually affected by an evaluation study? (p.174)**

* Sponsor
* Clients
* Stakeholders
* Audiences

**What are some of the reasons for initiating the Evaluation? (p.175)**

* Why is this evaluation being requested? What is its purpose? What questions will it answer?
* To what use will the evaluation findings be put? By whom? What others should be informed of the evaluation results?
* What is to be evaluated? What does it include? Exclude? During what time period? In what setting? Who is the intended client for the program? What are the goals and objectives of the program? What problems or issue is the program intended to address? Who is in charge of it? Who will deliver it? What are their skills and training? Has it ever been evaluated before?
* What are the essential program activities? How do they link with the goals and objectives? What is the program theory?
* How much time and money are available for the evaluation? Who is available to help with the evaluation? Is certain information needed right away?
* What is the political climate and context surrounding the evaluation? Will any political factors and forces preclude a meaningful and fair evaluation?

**What are the five uses of Informational Evaluation? (p.176)**

1. Determining whether sufficient need exists to initiate a program and describing the target audience;
2. Assisting in program planning by identifying potential program models and activities that might be conducted to achieve certain goals;
3. Describing program implementation and identifying whether changes from the program model have occurred;
4. Examining whether certain program goals or objectives are being achieved at desired levels; and
5. Judging the overall value of a program and its relative value and cost compared to competing programs.

**What are some of the Conditions under which Evaluation Studies Are Not Inappropriate? (p.178-181)**

* Evaluation Would Produce Trivial Information
* Evaluation Results Will Not Be Used
* Evaluation Cannot Yield Useful, Valid Information
* The Type of Evaluation Is Premature for the Stage of the Program
* Propriety of Evaluation Is Doubtful

**What Determines When an Evaluation Is Appropriate: Evaluability Assessment? (p.182-183)**

1. Program objectives, important sides effects, and priority information needs are well defined (that is, program managers have agreed on a set of measurable objectives and program performance indicators to be used in managing and assessing the program).
2. Program objectives are feasible to achieve with the intended target audience, the knowledge and skills of program deliverers, and the resources provided.
3. Intended uses of information are well defined ( that is, program managers have agreed on intended uses of program performance information) (Wholey, 1983, pp.39-40).

**How Does One Determine Whether a Program Is Evaluable? (p.183)**

1. Clarify the intended program model or theory.
2. Examine the program implementation to determine whether it matches the program model and could, conceivably, achieve the program goals and objectives.
3. Explore different evaluation approaches to determine whether the degree to which they meet stakeholders’ information needs are feasible to implement.
4. Agree on evaluation priorities and intended uses of the study.

**What are the advantages of using an External and Internal Evaluator? (p. 185-189).**

* External are more distant from the program and those involved
* If program is controversial and evaluation findings are to be used in settling dispute
* Expertise in their area
* Fresh outside perspectives
* Persons associated with the program usually reveal sensitive information to outsiders
* External evaluators feel more comfortable in presenting unpopular information
* Internal have more knowledge of the program
* Familiar with the various stakeholders and their interest, concerns and influence
* Internal evaluators know the history of the organization, clients, funders and stakeholders
* Internal evaluators will remain with the organization, already employed by the organization and oriented with the program
* Internal evaluators are a known quantity by their strength and weaknesses

**(Chapter 11)**

**Why is it important to identify intended audiences for an evaluation and set boundaries? (p. 200-203)**

* It is essential that the evaluator identify all the various stakeholders and audiences for the evaluation.
* An evaluation is adequate only if it collects information from and reports information to all legitimate evaluation audiences.
* Important audiences might be involved in an advisory group to the study and consulted frequently; some might become involved in data collection and interpretation of results; others might be briefed on a more intermittent basis.
* As data collection plans are developed and data are collected and analyzed, it is important to consider what information each audience needs and will use.

Program deliverers and primary managers will be interested in more detail than the general public or policy makers. Differing interests and needs often require that evaluation reports be tailored for specific audiences.

* Dialogue with multiple audiences also clarifies the reasons behind an evaluation.
* Setting boundaries is a fundamental step in gaining a clear sense of what an evaluation is about. No evaluation should be conducted without a detailed description of the program being evaluated.
* A **program description** is a description of the critical elements of the program to be evaluated. This description includes: goals, objectives, critical components, activities and description of the target audience.

**What is a program theory?** … “a specification of what must be done to achieve the desired goals, what other important impacts may also be anticipated, and how these goals and impacts would be generated” (p.205). It consists of two parts: normative and causative theory. Normative theory describes the program as it should be, its goals and outcomes, its interventions and the rationale for these, from the perspectives of various stakeholders. Causative theory makes use of existing research to describe potential outcomes of the program bases on characteristics of the clients and the program actions (P.205).

**What are the methods for describing the object of the evaluation? (p. 207**).

* Descriptive Documents
* Interviews
* Observations

**Analyzing the Resources and Capabilities That Can Be Committed to the Evaluation: (p.212-217)**

* Analyzing Financial Resources Needed for Evaluation
* Analyzing Availability and Capability of Evaluation Personnel
* Analyzing Technological and Other Resources and Constraints for Evaluation
* Analyzing the Political Context for the Evaluation

**Part Two:**

When I read chapter 10, this chapter reading reminds me of my year plans that I have to do every year as a teacher. When I put my year plan together, I have to have my needs of my students in mind, objectives and how would I evaluate my lessons or units? Evaluation is an integral part of our duties that we perform in today’s society.

Evaluation is a key component to our organization, school system and stakeholders. It is important because we have to know how we are performing so we can make room for improvements, discontinuation or continuation of a program.

Although, evaluation is a key component, it is sometimes difficult for an organization to find one since the program must know why they need an evaluator and who is going to be evaluating? The program must have plan in mind as to why an evaluator is required, cost and how do they find the right one. There are pros and cons to it. The organization must know why they need an evaluator and for what purpose. Sometimes an external evaluator is necessary if things at work are getting complicated and a third party needs to be involved to solve the situation at hand. Internal evaluators are there to assist with an external evaluator since the internal evaluator knows the company well and the employees but need assistance in making a decision.

I am aware of the protocol of setting up an evaluator checklist and the pros and cons of an internal and external evaluator. I learned that there is a negative and positive aspect of having an organization evaluated. Sometimes we as employees have no choice in the decision made by the stakeholders and we have to follow through with the decisions. But before an evaluator comes in to do the job, the organization must know why the evaluator is required and for what purpose. Plus, an evaluator can be costly and the organization needs to know the background experience of the evaluator.

As a participant in this evaluation program, I would make sure my organization is at a pitfall before I hire an external evaluator and I will do the evaluation with my employers myself. My employers know the organization and if I find some issues that cannot be solved, and then I will consider an external evaluation.

In Chapter 11, I realized that it is important to find the appropriate audience that will assist in evaluating the program. The audience must comply with our goals and objectives of the program. These audiences could be users of the program or they could be funding the program. When selecting the audience, a set of checklist is required to find the appropriate audience. There will be different checklists or criteria for every program or organization. The checklist in Figure 11.1 on page 202 is intended to help evaluators and clients think broadly of the audiences for evaluation and the purpose that might be served in involving them in the study or providing them with the evaluation information (p.201). All audiences are not interested in the same information. Program deliverers and primary managers will be interested in more detail than the general public or policy makers. Differing interests and needs often require that evaluation reports be tailored for specific audiences (p. 202). It is very crucial to find the appropriate evaluators since it can be financially draining if a program or organization does not find the right ones. Program staff or volunteers can help reduce the cost.

This is very interesting information because I find that this is the conflict our school is facing now. There is a political interference and financial restraint going on. Like where is the money going? Why is the teacher salary grid not increasing? These are questions I struggle with but I am not the boss but just an employee. I feel that there has to be some action taken to review the school staff and evaluation procedures of the school system. These two chapters (10/11) that I read are so eye opening to me and I wish that every school principal that a community hires knows the protocol and senses a situation happening before it gets out of hand and deal with the crisis instead of turning a blind eye! I just feel that the stakeholders do not involve the community‘s input and it is their children that we are teaching and I do not think they are aware of the situation that happens at our school but if they are aware, than there is that political interference too. Political issues get in the way of meeting the needs of the students we teach. “Whenever resources are redistributed or priorities are redefined, political processes are at work” (p. 216). No matter how things are done, there is always political interference and how are we suppose to meet the needs of our students if this continues in some communities?